

SANITIZED COPY

DATE: February 5, 1963

TO: The Vice President

FROM: Colonel Burris

RE: Executive Committee Meeting February 5

Mr. McCone has requested that the attached briefing on Soviet forces in Cuba be read prior to today's meeting. The usual procedure of reading of the entire document will no longer be followed. Only the highlights will be discussed. The document merely repeats earlier CIA estimates as to the Soviet forces and equipment in Cuba. [

] These troops in the CIA estimate defend Castro against internal attack and serve as a brake on Castro adventurism. No credit is given to the ability of these troops to quickly re-establish offensive systems in Cuba or to the deterrent factor of a possible invasion and attack of Soviet nationals. There are many other factors which possibly relate to the continued presence of Soviet troops in Cuba, not the least of which is the propagation of the Soviet experiment in this hemisphere. It would be a mistake to underestimate the reasons for the continued presence of these troops. Domestic political reaction, if charges however unsupported continue in the Congress and the press, may precipitate action. A precise policy is needed on this issue.

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Agenda for this afternoon's meeting will be as follows:

- 4:00 p.m. 1. Discussion of significant points of the attached intelligence memorandum.
2. Discussion of intelligence requirements on forces and weapons in Cuba with attention given to means of increasing effectiveness of intelligence collection.

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4:30 p. m. 3. Final discussion and recommended action on ships which have called at Cuban ports since January 1. Mr. Acheson, Governor Herter, Ambassadors Bruce and Kohler, will join the meeting.

4. Discussion of subject outlined by the President at last meeting.

The studies which the President requested at the last meeting have not yet been prepared for distribution. Certain papers might be ready for today's meeting although the security requirements which the President specified may preclude a modest amount of written material. Nevertheless the subject of future United States policy toward Europe will be discussed in the broadest context. No specific conclusions are expected to be drawn from today's meeting.

The depth of the crisis precipitated by de Gaulle's recent action requires thorough reassessment of United States policies from the political, military, and economic standpoints. In each of these spheres, new or reaffirmed courses of action are needed for the immediate crisis and for the long term prospects.

As a general rule, no action should be taken hurriedly in any sphere because it will simply accelerate deGaulle's motives, add to the growing anti-American feeling in Europe, and create additional frictions. Although innumerable hypotheses and assessments originate not only in Europe but throughout the world, the exact basis and origin of the move, as well as its eventual course, are not yet clear. Under these circumstances, the only feasible course of action appears to be to support the continuation of economic integration talks through whatever organization remains and to the extent feasible. The associated political developments of the EEC are now doomed.

On the military side, business as usual should be continued insofar as possible. Finletter feels that if the alliance holds firm, it can refuse to allow the French to upset unnecessarily most important NATO activities. Implementation of the Nassau Agreement should be subjected to less intensive study, thereby providing more time for the current moves to more clearly manifest themselves. It is not cynical to say that some of the basic principles of the NASSAU agreement are exactly those which precipitated the current crisis.

The critical vote in Brussels on U.K. admission to EEC was unfortunately timely and coincidental. A period of apparent inaction has existed in the Soviet Union since the Cuban confrontation and that crisis coincided with the fundamental cleavage between the Soviet Union and China which has torn away forever the myth

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of a monolithic Communist movement. The economic well being, political stability and assumed military strength of Western Europe have given new boldness and confidence to its leaders. By coincidence, the convergence of all these factors offer de Gaulle the opportunity to exercise his desires in asserting himself as a great man, as he sees it, and of achieving a settlement of the cold war which the allies over two decades have failed to do.

De Gaulle has admitted that he has for the past 10 years believed that the withdrawal of nuclear weapons and U.S. forces would be a means of reaching agreement with the Soviet Union. He also believes that under these circumstances the re-unification of Germany, perhaps neutral, could be achieved. In substance, de Gaulle is supporting the Rapacki (Polish Foreign Minister) plan on an atom-free Europe. About the only difference is Rapacki's proposal to negotiate the pact according to a phased plan, whereas de Gaulle would salvage the plan from the devastation which he has precipitated.

The passage or elimination of de Gaulle would not alter the European problem of the rigid stalemate which has developed. If the United States conceives eventual reunification of Germany and the disengagement of military forces which have opposed each other for almost 20 years, a more flexible course of action must be pursued. The achievement by the United States of overwhelming nuclear power now permits consideration of disengagement on the western front. The initiative of such disengagement should include, among other items, the release of the captive nations in Eastern Europe. Such current and apparently consuming problems as balance of payments, contribution to European defenses, basic relations with various nations resulting from military occupation and the arms burden, in general, would be eliminated. The United States should therefore not engage in the futile task of trying to return de Gaulle to the image of a conforming member of the Western Alliance. Instead, advantage should be taken of this debacle, which is more apparent than real, to accelerate a settlement of the European problem. The overwhelming nuclear strength in bombers, missiles, submarines and highly mobile ground forces now permits this consideration. A good place to start would be in the shifting of responsibility ;for support of U.S. troops to certain host nations in Europe, followed by gradual withdrawal of certain troop units. This might be covered by the strength of the POLARIS submarine forces in the area. If these same concessions and withdrawals could not elicit comparable Soviet concessions on the other side, it suffices to say that the possibilities are great of achieving the result once the basic decision has been made. It can be clearly established that neither the security of Western Europe or the United States in the broadest sense will be jeopardized.

The United States should not make the mistake of trying to corral or to discipline de Gaulle. Although he is being criticized, his actions are not without considerable support throughout the world. He has precipitated a crisis which the United States could welcome.